



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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STATE TO EXPAND MAUI'S KEAWAKAPU ARTIFICIAL REEF ON MONDAY

Public Asked to Stay Clear of Area While 1,500 Concrete Fish Habitats are Submerged

KAHULUI — The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) on Monday, November 30, will add approximately 1,500 “Z”-shaped modular fish habitats to the Keawakapu Artificial Reef, located about one-half mile off Keawakapu, Maui. The operation will begin about 9 a.m. and continue until finished.

Keawakapu Artificial Reef was created in 1962. It is approximately 52 acres in size, and consists of 150 cars, 2,250 tire modules, 35 concrete slabs, and one vessel (the “St. Anthony”) was added in 1997. This is the first addition of concrete modules since 1990 to expand the reef.

The modules, constructed from concrete by Pioneer Machinery, Inc. will be loaded onto an American Marine barge and will be deployed in 60-120 feet of water. Each “Z”-shaped form measures eight feet long by four feet wide with 12-inch legs at each end facing in opposite directions, and weighs about 2,200 pounds (1.1 tons).

Prior to and during the deployment of the “Z” forms, the target area will be marked with surface floats to warn fishermen, boaters, and divers to stay clear of the barge and the reef site, for safety reasons. State, county and federal agencies are being notified of this action prior to the scheduled deployment date.

The public is asked to stay at least 300 yards away from the deployment site. Diving and fishing on the artificial reef will not be allowed until the deployment is completed and the site has been inspected by DLNR staff.

“New coral and seaweed will grow on the forms, which will provide additional habitat to new communities of reef fish,” said Laura H. Thielen, DLNR chairperson. “Artificial reefs increase potential fishing grounds for fishermen, and the cost to the State is minimal,” she said.

DLNR has four shallow water (50-100') artificial reefs and one deepwater (300-420') artificial reef. Three of the shallow water reefs are located off O‘ahu at Wai‘anae, in Maunalua Bay, and Kualoa. The fourth is located off Keawakapu on Maui. The deep water artificial reef is located off ‘Ewa Beach, O‘ahu.

Numerous studies have shown that artificial reefs are effective at enhancing reef habitat, thus increasing fish biomass and species diversity within the reef site. Artificial reefs are key components in fisheries enhancement, as well as a substrate for the settlement of coral polyps (coral growth). Artificial reefs are also attractive SCUBA and snorkel dive sites.

For more information on the artificial reef program contact Paul Murakawa, DLNR-Aquatics, at 808-587-5404. Or go to the Division of Aquatic Resources website at http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/dar/artificial_reefs.html

Map:

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For more information, media contact:
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Keawakapu Artificial Reef, Maui

